

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

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The small town of Colne, nestled in the heart of Lancashire, was known for its charming streets and tight-knit community. Exchange Street, in particular, was a place where everyone knew everyone else's business, or so they thought. The street had a peculiar tale that had been passed down through generations, a tale of the ghost of Freddy Dean.

Freddy Dean had been a resident of Exchange Street for most of his life. He was a man of few words, a tarmac-er by trade, and a heavy drinker by choice. He spent his days working tirelessly under the scorching sun, paving roads and paths for the town's folk. When the sun set, he could be found at Red Lion, the local pub, nursing his favourite beer and sharing stories with his friends.

Freddy's life was a simple one, filled with the monotonous rhythm of laying down hot asphalt. But there was one thing that made him truly exceptional, something that no one would forget, even after he had passed away. It was the eerie incident that occurred on a chilly autumn evening.

One night, as the sun dipped below the horizon, Freddy Dean didn't show up at The Lion. His absence raised eyebrows and sparked hushed conversations among the regulars. It was unheard of for Freddy to miss his daily ritual.

When morning broke, the townsfolk discovered the shocking truth. Freddy's body lay lifeless on Exchange Street, right outside his own doorstep. The circumstances surrounding his death remained a mystery. There were no signs of foul play, no apparent reason for such an untimely demise.

Rumours and speculations swirled through the community like a ghostly fog. Some believed that Freddy had been cursed, while others suspected a tragic accident. But there was one theory that gained more traction than the rest – the idea that Freddy's ghost still roamed Exchange Street.

People began reporting strange sightings. A shadowy figure, resembling Freddy, was said to wander the street at night. It was always near the spot where he had died, and it seemed to be searching for something, or perhaps someone. Some claimed they heard whispers in the wind, faint echoes of Freddy's voice, calling out for a drink at Red Lion.

As the years passed, Freddy Dean's ghostly presence became an accepted part of Exchange Street's lore. People would leave a glass of whiskey outside their homes on the anniversary of his death, a gesture of respect for the tarmac-er who had become a local legend.

And so, Exchange Street Colne continued to thrive, its cobblestone pathways echoing with the footsteps of the living and the spectral wanderings of Freddy Dean's ghost. Freddy's story served as a reminder that even in a quiet town, beneath the seemingly ordinary lives of its inhabitants, mysteries and legends could be found, if one cared to look deep enough.

By Donald Jay